

## A Change Was Coming Luke 22:35-38

Over these recent years of my life, I have been more and more aware of how God has very purposefully put within His design for each of us periods of time that He calls “seasons”, “seasons”. Periods of time in which much of our daily existence will change from all that we have been accustomed to experiencing into something new, something different, some of those things pleasing to us, others not so pleasing.

One of the most obvious understandings that He gives to us can be seen in the four seasons of the year. And yes, they are inevitable and they will take place. While those changes don’t always occur on the same exact date each year, in March “Spring” begins and with it all of the behaviors of “nature” change and a newness begins to be seen all around us, the flowers, the trees, the weather.

And so it is also with the matters of our daily lives. Seasons come and seasons go and with them changes, some which we like and we welcome, others we struggle with.

Probably the best description of those “Seasons” of life given to us in these scriptures are the words given by the Wise Man Solomon in the Book of Ecclesiastes chapter 3 where he tells us that,

- <sup>1</sup> There is a time for everything,  
and a season for every activity under heaven:
- <sup>2</sup> a time to be born and a time to die,  
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
- <sup>3</sup> a time to kill and a time to heal,  
a time to tear down and a time to build,
- <sup>4</sup> a time to weep and a time to laugh,  
a time to mourn and a time to dance,
- <sup>5</sup> a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace  
and a time to refrain,
- <sup>6</sup> a time to search and a time to give up,  
a time to keep and a time to throw away,
- <sup>7</sup> a time to tear and a time to mend,  
a time to be silent and a time to speak,
- <sup>8</sup> a time to love and a time to hate,  
a time for war and a time for peace.

(Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

In His divine plan, God has built within our human condition this continual process of change, daily developments that will often bring about changes that we are not accustomed to and are not prepared for.

And so it was about to be with these disciples of our Lord Jesus. Within only a few hours of these moments there in the "Upper Room", "changes", very big changes were about to take place in which all of the matters of daily life for these disciples would be different, very different.

And here, with just these few words from the Lord Jesus, He began to make them aware of what was about to take place.

Recall that in the hours just passed, our Lord and His disciples had been taking part in the last meal that they would share together, a precursor to the Passover meal. And during the meal, Jesus had served them food, washed their feet and ministered to them as their Rabbi.

He had also said some strange things to them that they did not fully understand, things that would only become clear in the hours and days that lay ahead. But most importantly, Jesus had been saying to them that they needed to be prepared for a whole different set of circumstances of life, that the "Season" was about to change.

Pause with me and listen to these few words from our Lord , here beginning in verse 35 of Luke chapter 22.

<sup>35</sup> And He (the Lord Jesus) said to them, "When I sent you out without money belt and bag and sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?" They said, "No, nothing." <sup>36</sup> And He said to them, "But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one. <sup>37</sup> "For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, 'AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS'; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment." <sup>38</sup> They said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough." (Luke 22:35-38)

In only a few hours after Jesus spoke these words, everything that these disciples thought they knew about, and had once hoped for, would come to an abrupt

change. Their lives, their beliefs, their plans for the future would all be thrown into disarray and confusion.

Fear would take control over some of them, especially Peter, scattering most of them into hiding. Only John would be seen walking about openly and publicly. And here, Jesus was giving them a forewarning of those impending difficulties.

He began by reminding them of how in earlier days, as they traveled about on their missionary journeys all their needs had been met. Verse 35,

<sup>35</sup> And He said to them, "When I sent you out without money belt and bag and sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?" They said, "No, nothing."  
(Luke 22:35)

This dear Christian is the "providence of God". He is faithful to provide for us. And why should these disciples, and you and I, not trust that such things will continue to take place, even in the worst of conditions! Is not God able to do all things? Was not God able, in the beginning, to create everything out of nothing? Was He not able to simply speak and things that were not, became things that are. And had Jesus not fed thousands with only two fish and five loaves of bread?

Yes, He did do those things and He will continue to do those things! He is a loving and trustworthy Father. His provision is always sure, and in Him all things are "yea and amen". And it is not His nature to require His children to suffer needlessly.

And here He reminded His disciples of His faithfulness. He said,

<sup>35</sup> And He said to them, "When I sent you out without money belt and bag and sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?" They said, "No, nothing."  
(Luke 22:35)

Reminders like this are a necessary exercise, lest we forget God's gracious provision.

Recall from the Old Testament how God required the Israelites to continually rehearse the account of how He rescued them from bondage in Egypt, how He delivered them into the Promised Land, a land flowing with "milk and honey".

You and I must never forget the provisions that God has made for us personally, how He has delivered us from our bondage of sin and how He daily makes generous provision for all of our needs, food, clothing, a place to live, a car to drive, and on and on.

If we falter in reminding ourselves of His great provision, we will soon forget and soon become overwhelmed by thoughts about the things we don't have.

So then, knowing that God truly is always trustworthy to continue with His provision to these disciples, what did Jesus intend with His words of warning?

Does His warning mean that God will be making less of a provision for them? Or that they will have to begin to provide for themselves? No, not at all! Not at all!

Jesus simply knew that "changes", "real changes" were about to take place, a whole new and different "season" of life was coming to His beloved disciples.

And He anticipated two of the most inevitable consequences of His crucifixion. He knew first that He would be portrayed as an evildoer and be brutally killed. His words again, verse 37,

<sup>37</sup> "For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, 'AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS'; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment." (Luke 22:37)

And as was intended by the Roman brutality, great fear would strike deeply into the hearts of most all of the people.

Many of the people in the communities who in the past had been counted on to provide food and shelter for the disciples would now be fearful and might refuse to help them.

And even the disciples themselves would be brought to the greatest tests of their faith. They would often be overcome by their own doubts and fears. And unfortunately for some of them, their faith would falter greatly.

But such is the way whenever the element of "free will" is introduced into the equations of daily necessity and the promises of God. Men can quickly abandon the things hoped for in favor of the things that they can see with their eyes.

And knowing this to be true, and until their faith would be restored within them, their provision would be through the more “Common Graces” of money and weapons. And so He said to them,

<sup>35</sup> . . . "When I sent you out without money belt and bag and sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?" They said, "No, nothing." <sup>36</sup> And He said to them, "But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one. <sup>37</sup> "For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, 'AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS'; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment." <sup>38</sup> They said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough." (Luke 22:35-38)

Here, Jesus was telling His disciples that changes lay ahead for them, that there would be difficult days, and that for their provision and protection, they would now need to have money and to carry a sword.

Note carefully though, as to the swords, Jesus said that only two swords would be enough. Here, He is clearly telling the disciples that they would not be expected to develop and equip an army of fighting men. That would not be the way of the “gospel war” that His disciples would need to wage. Yes, they would go forth in future days and form armies, but those armies would carry only the “Sword of the Spirit”, the word of God.

But also, do these words about swords mean that God intends to withhold His security and protection from them? No, not at all! The sword would simply be another form of “Common Grace” that God would enable them to have.

Yes, as they had travelled about earlier, there had likely been threats made against them, and not just from the Chief Priests and the Romans, but also probably sometimes from robbers and thieves. But in each instance, God had provided His “Special Grace” of personal protection. But now, they must begin to live and minister under a different form of grace.

This step in their journey of faith reminds me of the steps God walked the Israelites through as He brought them out of Egypt and delivered them into the Promised Land. While in the desert, God gave the Israelites the “Special Grace” of Manna and quail. Their clothing and shoes never wore out and no one was able to attack and overcome them.

But once they entered into the Promised Land, those forms of "Special Grace" ended and God instead began to provide them with the more "Common Grace" of being able to grow their own food and fight their own wars.

But we must always know that the "Special Grace" of God's providential hand was always at work, enabling that food to grow and especially giving the Israelites the ability to defeat every enemy. All that God required of the Israelites was that they be faithful to Him. And as long as they remained faithful, His providential hand gave them everything they needed.

Here, in a similar way, Jesus would hand His disciples over to the care and provision and protection of the Holy Spirit.

In the Book of John, we read where in these same moments in the upper room, Jesus gave many assurances to His disciples about His continued provision and protections for them through the soon-coming Holy Spirit. There Jesus said,

<sup>26</sup> "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, (John 15:26)

In those words, Jesus was reassuring His disciples that the Holy Spirit would guide and direct every step of their way. All they would be required to do is to remain faithful.

And that same provision of God's Common Grace has been passed along to you and to me. We will lack for nothing that we really need, whether our needs be for food, or for shelter, or for protection from our enemies. God's providential hand will always be upon us, blessing us.

I must tell you that as I read these words of the Lord Jesus and I relate them to the circumstances of our modern world, my mind makes many correlations and parallels.

The pathway that lay just ahead for these disciples would be a difficult one. While their hopes and desires were only to do good and righteous things, to preach a gospel of repentance and salvation, a gospel of love and peace and kindness and unity, they would encounter some of the worst of resistance, and the vilest of cultural immorality.

And so it is within our own modern world. As we go forth to preach a gospel of repentance and salvation, a gospel of love and peace and kindness and unity, we also encounter the worst of resistance, and the vilest of cultural immorality. And it seems as if it is speeding up into a frenzy.

When we look around us at our own nation, we see clearly that our leaders and our people have chosen the “broad path” that leads to destruction. The moral fabric that once formed the protective walls and foundation of our nation has in recent years deteriorated at an alarming rate.

Like the Molechs and other pagan religious groups in the Old Testament, we daily sacrifice thousands of our children on the fiery altars of abortion for personal convenience and monetary gain.

And daily we see our leaders and our people living out some of the words given to us in Romans chapter 1 where our Lord speaks about a reprobate people. Listen to these words beginning in verse 21,

<sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. <sup>25</sup> They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

<sup>26</sup> Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. <sup>27</sup> In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. <sup>28</sup> Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. <sup>29</sup> They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. (Romans 1:21-29)

Do not these words so appropriately fit today's culture and lifestyle?

And just as Jesus sent His disciples out to minister within that vile and depraved culture of His day, so also are you and I being sent out to minister within our own crooked and depraved culture.

One last thought about these words of our Lord . . . may I repeat something that was said a moment ago. Here in His mention about the need for a sword, we must not misunderstand or be confused as to what our Lord would have us to do when we encounter the opposition that we are certain to encounter as we go forward and give His saving gospel to the world.

Yes, sometimes, perhaps often those encounters might become violent. And that is especially so as our missionaries go out into foreign mission fields to give the gospel to those nations controlled by the Muslim religion.

But also, and especially so, right now today as I speak these words to us, our own nation is embroiled in some of the most wide ranging and violent of culture wars, conflicts in the streets like we have never before experienced. And it worsens by the day.

The very "soul" of our American culture is deteriorating, as those "steps of reprobation" warned about in Romans chapter 1 march forward into mainstream America with misbehaviors and violence increasing at every turn. The "times" and the "seasons" truly are "changing" in ways that may never be recovered during these years remaining for mankind on the earth.

And clearly, as we have learned from our Lord in His instructions like those in the "Parable of the Weeds", He intends for us to remain in amongst that difficult culture, in the thick of those weeds, even experiencing some of their consequences so that we might minister to them in the process.

And again yes, as we have seen recently within some of the violence that has taken place within our present-day culture, we might need some form of a "sword" to protect ourselves. But may I strongly caution ourselves, that that kind of "sword" is "double-edged", "double-edged". And we might do far more damage to ourselves and to our loved ones than we could ever imagine, damage that is certainly not within the "Gospel Plan" of God.

No folks, the very best "Sword", the only "Sword" that can fulfill the "Gospel Plan" of God is the "Sword of the Spirit", our "bibles". His precious Word and His



Word alone is the remedy for the cares and the needs of this world and its culture.

Oh dear Christian, in our becoming a disciple of the Lord Jesus, we have joined ourselves to a Savior and Lord who will lead us through those very difficult days that will lay ahead for us. And while yes, some of those days will be joyous, feeling as if we are literally walking hand in hand with Him, in some other of those days, His presence might be hard to see and to feel and we might be tempted to be discouraged. But we must, we must, remain confident in our faith that our Lord will never really leave us nor forsake us.

So then yes, just as with our Lord's disciples then, a "change", a "new season" is coming to us now, to you and to me in our day, and we must, we must respond to those changes.

Any suffering that we might encounter will never truly go without our Lord's provision. He is trustworthy and His personal and providential hand is always at work within all that will take place.

May we close with these words that give us both a warning of things to come but also a message of comfort to sustain us through all that we will encounter! Jesus said . . .

<sup>16</sup> "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. <sup>17</sup> Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, <sup>18</sup> and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. <sup>20</sup> For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.(Matthew 10:16-20)

Pray with me.